

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 5        1. A reclosable flexible package comprising:  
              opposed front and rear panels having sides and  
              joined together to form an interior and a package opening  
              communicating with said interior;  
              first and second interlockable fastener tracks  
              configurable in an interlocked, closed position and an  
              unlocked open position;  
              a slider movable along said fastener tracks to  
10        configure said tracks in said interlocked position so as  
              to close said opening and to configure said fastener  
              tracks in said unlocked position so as to allow access  
              through said opening to said package interior;  
              said fastener tracks having opposed ends  
15        located adjacent said opposed sides of said front and  
              said rear panels;  
              stops adjacent said ends of said fastener  
              tracks to interfere with and prevent travel of said  
              slider beyond said fastener tracks;  
20        a side seal of pre-selected width joining  
              together one side of said front and said rear panels;  
              a shroud covering said slider and at least the  
              major portion of said fastener tracks;  
              weakening portions extending adjacent said  
25        fastener tracks for severing of said shroud in  
              preparation for removal of said shroud from the remainder  
              of said reclosable flexible package; and  
              said shroud defining at least one opening for said  
              slider, said opening having an acute angle portion  
30        communicating with said weakening portion.

2. The reclosable flexible package of claim 1  
wherein said weakening portion includes a line of  
weakness extending along at least the portion of said  
fastener tracks.

09945537-083001

SUB A

3. The reclosable flexible package of claim 2 wherein said line of weakness extends along the substantial entirety of said fastener tracks.

*SUB A2*  
4. The reclosable flexible package of claim 2 wherein said line of weakness extends across substantially the entire extent of said reclosable flexible package.

*2*  
5. The reclosable flexible package of claim 1 wherein said weakening portion includes a tear-start feature formed in one side of said reclosable flexible package to initiate tearing of said reclosable flexible package.

*5*  
6. The reclosable flexible package of claim 5 further comprising a line of weakness extending along said fastener tracks, cooperating with said tear-start feature to tear said reclosable flexible package, allowing said shroud to be removed from the remainder of said reclosable flexible package.

*4*  
7. The reclosable flexible package of claim 3 further comprising an angled weakening line between said tear-start feature and said line of weakness.

*5*  
8. The reclosable flexible package of claim 7 wherein the said angled severing line crosses said fastener tracks.

*6*  
9. The reclosable flexible package of claim 8 wherein the said line is a generally straight line.

*7*  
10. The reclosable flexible package of claim 9 wherein said opening through which said slider protrudes, said opening connecting said angled severing line and said line of weakness.

09945537.083001

<sup>8</sup>  
11. The reclosable flexible package of claim 1 wherein said shroud includes an upper portion comprising a fin seal.

SUB 3  
5 12. The reclosable flexible package of claim 11 wherein said shroud further includes a side fin seal above said fastener tracks, in line with the side seal trunning said front and said rear panels.

0945537-083001  
10 13. The reclosable flexible package of claim 1 wherein said shroud is integrally formed with said front and said rear panels, comprising monolithic portions of said front and said rear panels.

14. The reclosable flexible package of claim 1 wherein said shroud includes shroud panels separately formed and joined to said front and said rear panels.

15 15. The reclosable flexible package of claim 1 wherein said side seal having an enlarged end portion of enlarged width adjacent said fastener tracks, with at least a part of said enlarged end portion disposed below said fastener tracks; and  
20 wherein said enlarged end portion is disposed beneath the substantial entirety of said slider and shields said slider, deflecting product being discharged from said package interior, around said slider.

SUB 4  
25 16. The reclosable flexible package of claim 1 further comprising a peelable seal preventing communication of said opening with said package interior.

13  
12 17. The reclosable flexible package of claim 16 wherein said peelable seal comprises a hermetic seal.

14  
30 18. The reclosable flexible package of claim 1 wherein said stops comprise deformed end portions of said fastener track.

<sup>14</sup>  
~~18~~ <sup>15</sup>  
19. The reclosable flexible package of claim  
wherein said fastener track end portions are softened  
with application of ultrasonically generated heat and  
deformed under pressure.

5 <sup>15</sup>  
~~19~~ <sup>16</sup>  
20. The reclosable flexible package of claim  
wherein the bottoms of said fastener tracks are  
preserved undeformed.

09945537.083004

*Handwritten signature/initials*